

came to power, it should be remembered that the army of occupation marched away while Briining was at the helm and that reparations were dropped in 1932. Yet opportunities of further appeasement were lost. The vision of a lasting reconciliation between France and Germany symbolized by the name of Thoiry had failed to materialize.

The third chapter opened with the Reichstag elections of September, 1930, when the total of the Nazi representatives jumped from 12 to 107. The march of Hitler towards his goal was a portent, and the first gleams of the sunshine of Locarno were swept away. In *Mein Kampf* he had described France as the deadly enemy who must be struck down before the conquest of the east could begin. In the Nazi gospel of national resurrection there was no place for the League. The structure of security so laboriously erected at Locarno and Geneva seemed tottering to its fall. Briining remained in the Wilhelmstrasse with his small and precarious majority, but how long would he last? Everyone realized that the Nazi triumph was partly due to the renewed distress generated by the bursting of the American bubble in October, 1929. But its main cause was a new spirit of self-confidence and self-assertion. Though France was the party chiefly concerned, Great Britain, as the friend of France, could not look on unmoved. It was obvious that stormy weather was ahead. Two of the pilots had gone — Stresemann by death in 1929, Austen Chamberlain as the victim of the General Election of the same year. Only the ailing Briand remained, the mere ghost of his former self; and by this time the average Frenchman had ceased to believe in the policy of appeasement.

XI. AGGRESSION IN THE FAR EAST

A year after the emergence of Hitler a resounding blow was

struck at the League and the principles of friendly co-operation for which it stood. On September 18, 1931, Japanese troops in Manchuria occupied Mukden on the pretext that the railway had been cut: probably they had done it themselves. In any case it was the occasion, not the cause, of the seizure of Manchuria, for which elaborate preparations had been made. The Nankin Government was too weak to defend its distant possession, and none of the Powers was inclined to intervene. The League appointed a Commission of five, with Lord Lytton as Chairman, to investigate; but its members only reached the Far East in January, 1932, and by the time it reported in